

Town of Concord

APP #30

Use of Cell Phones While at Work

Purpose

The use of cell phones while at work has become an important aspect of both office and non-office activities. At the same time, it must be recognized that the use of both Town-issued and personal cell phones while at work may present a hazard or distraction to the user, fellow employees or others present. This policy is meant to ensure that cell phone use while at work is safe, is appropriate and does not disrupt business operations.

Use of Cell Phones While at Work

Unless otherwise authorized, employees shall only use personal cell phones for urgent matters or when they are on an authorized break. Only Town-issued, work-related cell phones are authorized to be in the "on" mode while operating vehicles or hazardous equipment at work. **Unless otherwise authorized, personal cell phones shall be shut off completely and shall not be used for either outgoing or incoming calls while operating such vehicles or equipment. Further, at no time shall any employee use any cell phone or any handheld device capable of accessing the internet to manually compose, send or read an electronic message while operating such vehicles or equipment.** At all other times while at work, personal cell phones should be set in an appropriate ring mode so that they are not disruptive to the workplace.

While operating a motor vehicle or other potentially hazardous equipment, employees' first and foremost responsibility is attending to their own safety and the safety of others, as well as to the care of the equipment. Therefore, if an employee places or receives a cell phone call while operating such vehicle or equipment, that employee must continue to direct their primary attention toward safety. The employee must remain duly attentive to the vehicle or equipment they are operating. If safety dictates that the employee's full attention must remain with the equipment they are operating, then the employee must not answer the call until they are sure that it is safe to do so. Under such circumstances, the employee should continue operation of the motor vehicle or other equipment until circumstances allow for the vehicle or equipment to be safely stopped and properly secured. Only then shall the employee proceed to respond to the delayed or missed call.

An employee who violates any provision of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Further Guidelines

Employees are referred to **APP #1 – Use of Town Property** for further guidelines on the use of Town property and the use of personal property while at work. Particular attention is drawn to Appendix A, which advises that *“It is recognized that Town phones must be used for personal calls on occasion during the workday. Such personal calls must be kept to a minimum. Whenever possible, employees should make non-emergency calls during scheduled breaks or when intervals in work assignments allow. When placing personal toll calls from Town phones employees should use personal telephone cards or access codes, or call collect. If, in an urgent situation, an employee inadvertently makes a call for which the Town is billed more than one dollar, the employee will reimburse the Town for the cost of the call.”*